

ICHTHYOPLANKTON OF THE EASTERN BERING SEA

By

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ABSTRACT

Samples of **ichthyoplankton** collected with bongo and neuston nets at 64 locations in the eastern Bering Sea during 16 April - 15 May 1977 contained 24,611 fish eggs and ~~14,171~~ fish larvae. **Pollock** (Gadidae) accounted for 97% of the eggs and 59% of the larvae with the remainder divided among 18 families of which the 8 most numerous were, in order of decreasing abundance, **Hexagrammidae**, Cottidae, **Pleuronectidae**, Ammodytidae, Osmeridae, Scorpaenidae, Stichaeidae, and **Bathylagidae**.

There were no marked differences in distribution and abundance of **pollock** eggs and larvae between 1976 and 1977, though eggs appeared to have been more abundant in 1976 and larvae more abundant in 1977. Comparison of bongo and neuston net catches indicated that almost all **pollock** larvae and a majority or **pollock** eggs were more than 0.25 m below the sea surface. However, larval **hexagrammids** and cottids were caught almost entirely with neuston nets in the upper 0.25 m of water, and more of these two groups were caught in 1977 than in 1976.

Repetitive sampling at 24 locations showed that both **pollock** eggs and larvae were more abundant during late April and least abundant in mid-April. An estimated 7.829×10^{12} **pollock** eggs and 7.498×10^{12} **pollock** larvae were present in a survey area of $9.57 \times 10^{10} \text{ m}^2$ during 19-27 April 1977.